CAMPAIGN AGAINST
carf
RACISM & FASCISM

No 14 May/June 1993 80p

who are the extremists?

- Europe's surveillance
- Show trials
- Expulsions
- 'Terrorism' laws
- Disinformation
- Censorship
- Passport checks
- Fingerprinting

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EDITORIAL

An administrative system of internal controls of asylum-seekers is being set up across Europe – providing the foundations for yet another layer of pan-European institutionalised racism. The introduction (under the Asylum and Immigration Appeals Bill) of the fingerprinting of all would-be refugees is just part of a whole European apparatus of checking and information gathering, coordinated by the TREVI group through computerised networks, which permeates every aspect of administration. Using passports to determine who will get services – be it in housing, health care, welfare or education – will not only place a burden of fear on asylum-seekers that any social welfare agency can inform on them or their relatives, maybe jeopardising whatever refuge they have found in the West, but also inevitably lead to the checking of all black people. The Court of Appeal's decision in April (see p6), which establishes that local authorities have a duty to inform on 'illegal immigrants' to the Home Office, means that local authority agencies are now, officially, part of the surveillance process.

And such institutionalised, administrative racism is being validated on an ideological level. Alongside enforced fingerprinting (itself part of a criminalisation process) has come a new propaganda war against asylum-seekers. In place of the threat of communism has come the threat from the Third World – and particularly from its 'fifth column' of asylum-seekers, already in Europe. Through collusion between politicians, the police and the media, we are being fed propaganda intended to frighten us into regarding all Third World peoples in Europe as criminals, if not political terrorists (see p4).

Anti-racists must be aware of the two pillars of the new information society – surveillance, on the one hand, and disinformation and censorship on the other. For while the local authority, at the point at which a person applies for services, informs, the media disinforms, thereby providing the police with the alibi they need for mass raids, the hunting down of 'illegal immigrants' and a wave of political expulsions and deportations. ■

Far-right tentacles

The killers of Chris Hani, general secretary of the South African Communist Party and ex-leader of Umkhonto we Sizwe (the ANC's military wing), are linked with the worldwide far Right via Western Goals. Its president, Clive Derby-Lewis, has been arrested in connection with the assassination, along with his wife, Gaye, and the man who allegedly pulled the trigger, Janusz Waluz. Waluz is known to have been connected to the neo-nazi Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (AWB), whose swastika-like emblem is mirrored by that of Combat 18.

The gun used in the assassination was one of a cache of arms stolen in April 1990 from the air force headquarters in Pretoria. The man arrested for the raid, Piet Rudolph, deputy leader of the Boerestaat Party (a far-right party in South Africa), said the stolen weapons were for use in a 'counter revolution'.

Derby-Lewis is a member of the President's Council, set up by De Klerk's predecessor to resolve any deadlock between the racially-segregated chambers of the three-tiered (white, coloured and Indian) parliament. He subscribes to the World Apartheid Movement, which has offered to pay Waluz's legal costs. WAM is linked with white supremacist groups in the US and Europe.

Derby-Lewis also has connections with our old friend, revisionist historian David Irving. When Irving visited South Africa for a nationwide speaking tour organised by the South African right wing last year, he said he would 'certainly see Clive Derby-Lewis' (then a Conservative MP) and other CP members.

This international right-wing linkage with South Africa has dangerous connotations for the future of democracy there. With the plethora of white racist groups springing up, most of which have their own private armies with apparent ease of access to arms, a violent upheaval in South Africa appears inevitable. ■

Self-defence is no offence

Metropolitan police commissioner Paul Condon has told his officers to be intolerant of racist attacks.

In a speech in February to a conference on 'Fairness, community and justice', the new commissioner said that 'the police must be totally intolerant of racially motivated attacks, intolerant of those who indulge in racial abuse, and intolerant of those who use hatred and violence as the tools of their political expression'. But for many black Londoners, the most pernicious intolerance exhibited by the police occurs when they fight back against racism.

Gillean Sinckler acquitted

In February, Gillean Sinckler, an African-Caribbean woman from Surrey, was charged with actual bodily harm after reporting to the police a racist assault on her by three of her neighbours. On 26 February, three days before Commissioner Condon's speech, she was acquitted at Kingston Crown Court.

Gillean told CARF: 'I was kicked and punched and racially abused by my neighbour and her husband and son. I called the police but they went to visit my neighbours before coming to see me, even though I was the one to phone them. When they came, they were completely uninterested in what I had to say; they kept asking me if I had a criminal record, or if I had ever been in trouble with the police before. The police say that they take racial incidents seriously but when I told them that I had been called a "black bitch", the officers responded by saying, "Don't let a few names bother you." They said they would come back the next day to take a statement, but, when they did, they just arrested me. My neighbours have never been charged with any offence even though I had bruises to show where they hit me.'

More cases

According to Gillean's lawyer, Kapil Juj, her case is not an isolated incident, but only one of many self-defence cases that he has dealt with in recent months. 'Police investigative procedures are breaking down', he says. 'Junior PCs are not investigating cases properly. They immediately treat the victims as suspects on the basis of statements given by the assailants, their friends and family.'

'It's basically the same old story', says Hossein Zahir of the Newham Monitoring Project, which has just released its Annual Report which documents numerous cases (including that of an Asian man who was arrested after he called the police following an assault on him by a white man armed with a hammer) of police criminalisation. 'On the one hand, when the police are called their response is to say there's nothing we can do, we can't act as judge and jury. But, on the other hand, they do precisely that – they judge the victim to be the guilty party and arrest him or her on the spot.'

Surveillance

Another trend Hossein detects is a redirection in the focus of the work of the local Racial Incidents Squads. Having gained an insight into the Asian community over the years since its formation, NORIS is now directing its resources towards what it sees as rivalry between Asian gangs.

Over in Drummond Street, in north London, Bengali youth have been subject to police surveillance for a number of years. The trial of four Bengali youths from Drummond Street is set to begin in June. They are charged with grievous bodily harm and causing violent disorder, arising from a day of racial violence in April 1992 during which a gang of racist thugs drove around in a car and threatened to kill an Asian shopkeeper.

During the 40 minutes it took the police to arrive, Asian youth gathered to protect the community. Initially, police failed to apprehend any of the white youths involved. But after some pressure, five whites were arrested. Now the CPS, while pressing ahead with the case against the Bengalis, has dropped the case against the whites.

Is this the Met's idea of 'fairness, community and justice?' Gillean Sinckler has something to say on that: 'I used to think there was good and bad in every organisation', she told CARF. 'But now I look at the police in a different light. I wouldn't report an incident to them again. It took the jury just five minutes to acquit me. But I feel angry that I had to go through all that. Why should I have been the one to face charges, when it was me that was attacked?' ■

The Drummond Street Four Campaign (c/o 1 Robert Street, London, NW1) is asking supporters to write to Barbara Mills, Director of Public Prosecutions, at Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1, demanding that the charges be dropped.

Mark Salmon

Shane Ward and Bill Duffus were arrested by police, who racially abused them, after objecting to a BNP paper sale in Birmingham on 6 March. The Shane Ward defence campaign can be contacted c/o Birmingham Racial Attacks Monitoring Unit, Birmingham Afro-Caribbean Resource Centre, 339 Dudley Road, Winson Green, Birmingham B18 4HB.

The making of terrorists and dissidents: Europe's new war on the Third World

For years, CARF has warned that a new Euro-racism is in the making. Police chiefs, security services and government ministers are helping to construct a racism that seeks to characterise all Europe's Third World people as criminals, terrorists and drug-runners.

In recent months, we have seen newspapers across Europe popularising the theme that immigration = criminality = terrorism. The release to the media of crime statistics by the police has encouraged this racist stereotyping. The Greek press used figures put out by the public order minister in February on the crime rates of different 'foreigner' groups, to justify the rounding up of hundreds of Albanians for immediate expulsion. Amsterdam police figures, seeking to prove that youth from Surinam and the Antilles are disproportionately involved in street crime, led to stories in the press about the possibility of 'LA-style race riots' in Holland.

The link between the police, racialised crime statistics, media criminalisation and politics is most palpable in Norway, where police released statistics this year attempting to prove that 'immigrants' are over-represented in crimes of violence, rape, assault and robbery. Against a backdrop of media scare stories, and with a general election pending, the Norwegian mainstream parties have attempted to out-bid each other in calls for new measures to deport 'criminal immigrants'. The far-right Progress Party has argued that every refugee and asylum-seeker should be considered a criminal unless the opposite can be proved.

Police-fed 'terrorist' stories

The police are also developing links with particular newspapers in order to plant rumours about possible 'terrorist' threats. In October 1992, the Italian daily, *Il Giornale*, ran a series of stories, based on police briefings, which claimed that poor, Third World immigrants and refugees were likely recruits for far-left terrorist organisations.

Also in October, Paul Charman wrote an alarmist feature for London's *Evening Standard* on 'How world extremists set up havens in London'.

GUIDE TO THE ANGRY FACTIONS
TROOPS OUT
IRA sympathisers. Registered London headquarters of the fund-raisers and campaigners for Irish republicanism at
SHINING PATH
Peruvian terrorists. This could soon be its new European headquarters. At present, its London office, run by Adolfo Olaechea.
BRITISH SIKHS
Radical British Sikhs campaign for the radical separatist movement in India here at the Sikh Temple in
CAMDEN REFUGEE FORUM
TAMIL TIGERS
The Sri Lankan separatists, whose compatriots are engaged in a fierce terrorist war against their government. London representation is at according to government sources.
KURDISH WORKERS' ASSOCIATION
With 2,000 members in London, the group, whose counterparts have staged terrorist attacks in Germany, is based at
PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANISATION
The long-time London headquarters of PLO, at
Although it recently renounced terrorism, it maintains links with some 20 British 'solidarity groups'.

Included in his 'Guide to the angry factions who could be your neighbour' (illustrated with snapshots of so-called terrorist hide-outs and their addresses) were the Kurdish Workers' Association, the Tamil Tigers, Shining Path, British Sikhs, PLO, Troops Out, ANC and (presumably as a sop to journalistic balance) Blood & Honour.

Changing Europe's security concerns

But why are the police and intelligence experts feeding scare stories to a willing press now? According to Tony Bunyan, editor of the counter-information bulletin *Statewatch*: 'The stories appearing in Europe's press merely reflect the issues raised by the security services and the police in the secret European policing forum, TREVI (which stands for terrorism, radicalism, extremism and international violence). The concerns of the security services reflect the geo-political interests of the new Euro-state.'

Tony Bunyan says that, since the Gulf war, the military and intelligence services of Europe have been priming themselves for new fields of operation. 'It is no longer the Soviet threat and, internally, the threat from Communists that concerns western governments; instead, they are directing their resources towards the Third World, towards those countries who do not accept the "New World Order".'

MI5 sits on TREVI, and its associated sub-committee the 'Police working group on terrorism', in which the European states are working on a common intelligence database on refugees, asylum-seekers, visa entrants and Third World migrants settled within the EC. Hence, behind one of the most obnoxious proposals in Britain's new Asylum Bill – the compulsory fingerprinting of all refugees – lies the hidden hand of TREVI.

Turning refugees into a political threat

Third World refugees within 'Fortress Europe' are considered 'dissidents' twice over. First, they are 'dissidents' of the regimes they have fled from. Then, with Europe increasingly making allies of authoritarian regimes in the Third World, opponents of those regimes within Fortress Europe become Europe's 'dissidents' also, a fifth column, the enemy within. And a whole new range of measures, which go beyond mere surveillance, is being introduced to criminalise them.

In 1987, the German and Swedish police carried out a series of raids on Kurdish targets, denouncing them collectively as terrorists. And to this day, the Swedish security police periodically put out stories blaming Kurds for the murder of the Swedish prime minister, Olof Palme. Ismet Celiphi, accused of the murder (and other unspecified terrorist offences), was forbidden to leave his municipality from 1987 to September 1991, when

the Supreme Court ruled the order unconstitutional. His lawyers have never seen the evidence against him. Celiphi complains of telephone tapping, bugging and police harassment that has destroyed his life and that of his family.

After large-scale police operations in Switzerland against Kurds accused of plotting to assassinate the Turkish ambassador, detailed information on individual Kurds is said to have found its way into the hands of the Turkish embassy. (The Turkish army was the largest client of the Swiss arms industry.)

Show trials

In October 1992, the Swiss government published a report on 'Extremism in Switzerland'. Although instigated by neo-nazi attacks on refugee hostels, the report dismissed the far Right as a diminishing problem and went on to list foreigner, exile, refugee and left groups as the main danger to the state.

But even before this, a show trial against Turkish-Kurdish refugees had, according to the Swiss organisation 'Komitee Schluss mit dem Schnuffelstaat (Committee to End the Prying State) exposed the security concerns of the state. On 14 January 1992, riot police raided the Berne office of the socialist, Turkish-Kurdish journal *Mucadele*, arresting 26 people, including women and children. The raid was accompanied by a press campaign in the *Blick* newspaper (the Swiss equivalent to the *Sun*) that accused *Mucadele* of orchestrating crime to fund terrorism, and of running an extortion racket.

At a special press briefing, the Swiss public prosecutor said that 'the police had received clear information that *Mucadele* was blackmailing people to give money to Dev-Sol' (Kurdish socialists), further implying that those arrested were involved in drugs trafficking.

In December 1992, five handcuffed prisoners were led into court, while defence solicitors and journalists were searched for weapons. But the only clear picture to emerge at this political show trial was of a police frame-up, aided and abetted by a compliant media.

Police evidence was derisory. When asked where he got his evidence from, one policeman replied the newspaper *Schweizerzeit* (a bastion of the conservative Right); another cited the *Blick*. And when the Federal Attorney's Office was called to give evidence on the ideological and terrorist background of *Mucadele*, a note was sent saying that 'special information respecting *Mucadele* and special knowledge of Dev-Sol activists does not exist at our offices'. The case against the Mucadele 5 collapsed.

'It is very likely that the Turkish secret service is attempting to dry up the sources of financial support from Europe that would finance organisations like Dev-Sol', says Christine Rumpeth, a Turkish specialist at the Max Planck Institute. She believes that the Turkish secret service, MIT, had a hand in the *Mucadele* case, and also cites incidents from Germany where MIT was known to be collecting information on exiles.

Expulsion

Across Europe, there are attempts to expel individuals on grounds of 'national security'. In such cases, those accused of terrorist offences have no chance of answering the evidence against them in open court. Here, where the Home Office reserves the right to withhold information on the grounds of 'national security', a Sikh and a Peruvian refugee are presently under threat of deportation in such circumstances.

Two Palestinians were expelled from Sweden last December after a special court pronounced them to be members of Abu Nidal's group. The Palestinians – one of whom had lived in Sweden for a number of years and whose family had settled there – vehemently denied the charge, but both were refused the right to present their case in open court. The Swedish government is now considering bringing in a new law to make it easier to refuse entry to those believed to be a threat to its 'security laws'.

In September 1992, Omar Tariq, who had lived in Italy for nearly 10

Gabriela Feldmann

Even though the case against the Mucadele 5 collapsed in court, a retrial is set for November. As the five are asylum-seekers, campaigners fear that even if found not guilty, their asylum applications will be rejected.

years and was president of the Milan-based Union of Muslim Students, was served with an expulsion order and immediately deported to Jordan. The Union of Islamic Communities condemned the 'total absence of any real motivation for the expulsion'.

Conventions and laws governing extradition state that no refugee can be returned to his or her country of origin if s/he fears persecution or if his or her offence was political. Clearly, these rights of refugees and exiles are being whittled away. But if, in the cases cited above, the state has had to announce its case against the accused (even as it withholds its evidence), a second category of expulsion, affecting workers from Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia and Turkey, is taking place even more surreptitiously.

Agreements between the EC and these 'buffer zone' countries promise preferential terms of trade in return for the EC countries being able to return any refugee who travels through these countries back to them. The agreements have meant closer cooperation between the police and the security services of the EC and the Maghreb. For example, when Tunisian W Bennani arrived at a Belgian airport claiming political asylum, his application was refused point blank because of the intervention of Tunisian police, and in line with a Belgo-Tunisian convention on mutual juridical assistance.

Most horrifying of all is the case of Abdennacer Ben Yussef, a metal worker living with his wife and children in Parma, Italy, who just disappeared without trace. Because he had gone to the local police station to renew his residence permit, his pregnant wife went to the station to find out where he was. Although held and questioned, she was told nothing. Weeks later she found out that Ben Yussef – who had no criminal record and had never been a member of any Tunisian opposition group (he was a member of the perfectly legal Union of Tunisian Immigrant Workers) – had been expelled from Italy to Tunisia (where he was imprisoned and tortured) on the grounds of 'national security'.

Ben Yussef has since managed to escape from Tunisia. His case has been taken up by Amnesty International and the civil rights group Senza Confine. ■

Additional information from *Migration Newssheet*, Statewatch and the bulletin of the Institute of Race Relations European Race Audit.

Buffer zones

The EC has recently signed 'Association Agreements' with the countries on its eastern borders – Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Romania and Bulgaria. Like long-standing agreements with Turkey, Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia, they give a measure of preferential trade and, in some cases, offer limited opportunities for work in EC countries. In exchange, the border countries have been forced to sign parallel agreements which make them the border policemen of Europe. Under these:

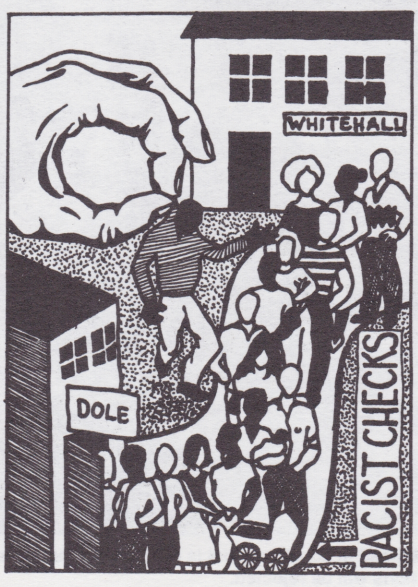
- Special prisons in Morocco hold Africans suspected of wanting to travel illegally to Europe.
- 2,500 Moroccan troops patrol the Moroccan coast to ensure that refugees and immigrants are not smuggled to Spain in small fishing boats.
- Thousands of rejected Third World and eastern European refugees are held in prison camps in Hungary.
- Visitors to Poland (from, for example, Russia) need written invitations, and thousands are excluded. Many more are detained to prevent them from crossing the river Oder into Germany.
- Helicopters, sea patrols, night-vision aids and electronic surveillance are all part of a package of strengthened external border controls discussed at a conference at Budapest in February, attended by ministers of 33 European countries.

No to passport checks

In the last few years, passport checks and internal controls on black people in Britain have intensified. They are set to become even more widespread with the new asylum law. CARF examines the implications of the new internal controls.

Last month, the Court of Appeal told housing authorities that they should report 'illegal' immigrants applying to them for housing to the Home Office. The Department of the Environment's guidance on housing homeless families says that everyone admitted to Britain 'is entitled to equal treatment under the law' and that information on an applicant's immigration status is confidential. This was 'misleading and wrong', said the judges, allowing the appeal of Tower Hamlets against a High Court decision that immigration control was a function not of a local authority but solely of the Home Office.

Boroughs such as Tower Hamlets will be in the forefront of zealous immigration controls on housing applicants as a result of the Asylum Bill's housing provisions. Under the Bill, if a local authority has 'reason to believe' that a homeless person applying for housing is an asylum-seeker, it will be obliged to investigate that person's immigration status. If it decides that he or she is an asylum-seeker, it may offer only temporary accommodation.



Although the Bill targets asylum-seekers, it is not only they who will be subjected to identity and status checks. All black people become potential suspects. This is what happened when fees were introduced for NHS treatment for overseas visitors in 1981, and when 'no public funds' tests began to be stringently enforced in the 1980s.

Passport to benefits

Checking immigration status has become completely institutionalised in the Department of Social Security since 1988, when the new income support regulations made it directly relevant to benefits. DSS officers must fill in a form asking if claimants have come to live in the UK within the past five years. If so, they are obliged to arrange a full interview, to which claimants must bring all travel documents and details of their immigration status. The

Income Support Manual instructs staff to tell claimants that the Home Office will be notified if income support is paid.

In practice, this means, first, that black people are often regarded with suspicion when claiming benefit – particularly if they don't speak good English – and second, that whenever someone's immigration status is in question, benefits are cut off. Constant liaison between the DSS and the Home Office has resulted in many arrests of alleged overstayers at DSS offices.

The introduction in November 1991 of the Standard Acknowledgment Letter (SAL) (see *CARF* No 8) has caused huge problems for asylum-seekers, according to the Committee for Non-Racist Benefits. Delays of up to six months before the letter is issued have been reported. And as the Committee says, 'no SAL, no benefit': many DSS offices refuse benefit to asylum-seekers who cannot produce it. The result is a growing number of asylum-seekers with literally no money, no food and threatened with eviction for non-payment of rent.

Fingerprinting

The Asylum Bill also adds the indignity of fingerprinting. All asylum-seekers and their dependants, including children, will be fingerprinted on arrival. Failure to comply can result in arrest and refusal of the asylum claim. When asylum-seekers claim benefit, a DSS official not satisfied as to their identity will be expected to contact the Home Office so that more checks and further fingerprinting can be carried out. Fingerprinting was justified in the House of Commons on the basis of 'fraudulent multiple claims' for asylum and for social security benefits. A series of highly publicised raids on 'bogus refugees' had resulted in only 11 convictions, but the effect of the publicity, and of the provisions, is to criminalise asylum-seekers in the public mind, equating them with cheats and scroungers.

Neither home secretary Kenneth Clarke nor his immigration minister, Charles Wardle, admitted the true purpose of the fingerprinting provisions: to put them into a European data bank so that immigration officials in any other European country can identify and reject anyone who has previously applied for asylum elsewhere in Europe.

Institutionalising controls

The creeping institutionalisation of internal controls since the late 1970s and early '80s gives the lie to the myth that Britain, with its tough border controls, has a relatively relaxed system of control on those inside the country. The notion that access to health care, housing, social security, education and other benefits depends on need has been savagely eroded in recent years.

Since the introduction of fees for overseas visitors having NHS treatment, Family Practitioner Committees have required passport numbers from 'immigrants' applying for medical cards. Admission forms to NHS hospitals ask whether the patient has been in the UK for the last 12 months; if the answer is no, there is 'Stage 2 questioning', during which passports are often requested, 'to see if the patient is from an EC country or another country with reciprocal arrangements for health care'. Since the tightening up on the ban on work for visitors and students, and tougher immigration enforcement policies in the mid-1980s, national insurance numbers have been coded so that immigrants' numbers are instantly recognisable. Under a long-standing arrangement, the Registrar-General informs the Home Office of any marriages reported as possible 'immigration' marriages.

Private sector

The checks have crept into the private sector, too. For some years, many employers have demanded passports to check that the employee has the right to work. A black applicant who was asked to produce his passport for a job at McDonalds lost his case of race discrimination when McDonalds said it demanded passports of all non-EC workers regardless of colour or nationality.

After a number of black people were asked for their passports when they tried to open accounts with the National Westminster Bank, CARF wrote to its head office asking it to justify this. The reply ran that intending customers are always asked to provide either a driving licence or a passport as evidence of identification. But our informants say they were not given this choice. Other high street banks in all likelihood operate the same policy.

History of resistance

In the 1980s, the growth of internal controls gave rise to important – and often effective – campaigns against passport checking. In 1982, for example, Newham council in east London was the first to instruct its housing officers not to require passports as a means of identification. In 1986, industrial action halted a pilot scheme to record the ethnic origin of unemployed people. In 1989, when a raid on a clothing factory in Hackney resulted in the arrest of 39 Kurds and Turks, a 200-strong picket obtained the release of 27 of them.

More recently, internal controls have not been a campaigning issue for the anti-racist movement. As for the public sector unions, they seem to have become demoralised, and there is now passive or active cooperation with racist requirements. Some local officials of Nalgo, the only union to be involved officially in the campaign against the Asylum Bill, are trying to push through policies of non-cooperation on the Bill's housing provisions, but they are not optimistic. The issue of campaigning against internal controls must be put back on the anti-racist agenda.

CARF would like to hear from community groups, trade unions and anyone else who is campaigning against internal controls. ■

Committee for Non-Racist Benefits, c/o Greenwich WRU, tel: 081-854 8888 x 8222. RAHCAR, the Refugees' Ad Hoc Campaign against the Asylum Bill, needs money to pay for the publicity and campaigning around the Bill. Please send donations to RAHCAR, 365 Brixton Road, London SW9 7DB.

Expulsion: Britain leads the way

In terms of repressive and anti-democratic measures, Europe has much to learn from Britain's use of exclusion orders against the Irish.

Britain is the only country in Europe which currently practices internal exile through orders made under the Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act 1989 (PTA). The PTA allows for a person to be excluded from the UK as a whole, from Britain only, or from Northern Ireland only. The penalty for breaking an exclusion order is a fine or jail.

There is something particularly sinister about internal exile. It is punishment, not for wrong-doing or crime, but for thought. It's political, repressive, and often racist. What is more, those who are excluded are often people known to loyalist death squads. An exclusion order may prevent them from leaving Northern Ireland, thereby putting their lives in danger.

Who decides who is excluded

Between 1974 and the end of 1991, 401 people were excluded from Britain, most to Northern Ireland. If one believes the Home Secretary – that those excluded are dangerous terrorists – then Northern Ireland has become a dumping ground for such people. But should we believe him?

Before someone can be excluded, the Secretary of State must be satisfied that the person is, or has been, involved in the commission, preparation or instigation of acts of terrorism, or that he or she may attempt to enter the United Kingdom with such an intention. The 'test' is effectively conducted by Special Branch officers at the National Joint Unit at Scotland Yard on behalf of all British police forces, in conjunction with MI5 and intelligence officers from the Royal Ulster Constabulary.

The test is entirely subjective, and essentially unchallengeable. The only review allowed is to an official, appointed by the Home Secretary, who often refuses even to identify him or herself. At no stage is the person concerned told of the case against him or her, making any form of appeal worthless.

Exclusion as censorship

Britain's security forces go to very great lengths to arrest, jail or shoot those involved in what they consider to be 'terrorist' offences. Excluded people are usually those against whom there is no evidence of terrorist involvement. Some are simply articulate political leaders – in this sense, exclusion is a form of censorship. Others are Irish republicans released from British jails, or people acquitted of terrorist offences in Britain.

Britain is said to be expert in matters of human rights. The reason is simple: it has been brought before the European Court of Human Rights more times than any other country. In retaining exclusion as an option under the provisions of the PTA, Britain cannot ratify Protocol 4 of the European Human Rights Convention, which provides for freedom of movement and settlement within one's own country. ■

Statewatching the new Europe

For several years, the skeleton of a secretive, authoritarian and deeply racist state has been gradually assembled in committee rooms and plush hotels across Europe, by groups of civil servants, police and security officials and ministers accountable neither to their national parliaments nor to the European parliament. This was laid bare to an audience of over 400 people at a Statewatch conference on 27 March.

The issues of racism and growing European fascism were of central concern. Liz Fekete of CARF spoke of the links between racist attacks, the 'popular' racism of the tabloids and the 'referendum' politicians, and the racism of European governments who blame the victims of racism and pass more and more vicious laws against immigrants and asylum-seekers.

Keynote speaker A Sivanandan called urgent attention to the need for citizenship rights for black communities across Europe as a necessary pre-condition to their further struggles for justice. This call was echoed by representatives of the Belgian group, Objectiv, which is campaigning for the right to citizenship based on residence or birth in the country, currently denied to second- and even third-generation black settlers in Belgium, as it is in Germany.

In the face of the mass deportations of Roma (Gypsies) from Germany and their illegal treatment at the eastern borders of the EC, a resolution put forward by Biplab Basu of the Berlin-based Anti-Racist Initiative was passed calling for independent observers to be sent to the eastern border areas to monitor the reception of refugees and to show solidarity with them. ■

Inside Europe's lock-ups

As part of its contribution to a European-wide campaign against imprisoning asylum-seekers, CARF will report regularly on the protests of refugees and on other moves to stop refugees being criminalised.

In Germany, virtual mutinies occurred in 'concentrated accommodation' during February and March. In response to the government's replacement of subsistence cash payments with food parcels, there were protests in several reception centres. In one hostel in Eisenach, between 100 and 140 asylum-seekers, protesting against the introduction of food parcels, were forcibly evicted by the police and transferred to the central reception centre for asylum-seekers in Gotha. The authorities have used the media to paint a picture of asylum-seekers as mindless thugs intimidating others into not accepting food parcels.

What is clear is that the German authorities are desperate to suppress the true situation. They have moved to ban anti-racists and political organisations from entering the camps.

In Italy, the Rifondazione Comunista has taken up the case of an asylum-seeker who says that he was tortured by security guards at a local immigration centre when he did not produce the correct identity papers.

The Danish government is presently reviewing its practice of keeping asylum-seekers on a floating ship anchored in Copenhagen harbour. A statement by home affairs minister Birthe Weiss in February, indicating that the floating ships were to be phased out, was contradicted in March when she revealed that a new floating ship was under construction. Confused? CARF has written to Birthe Weiss for clarification. ■

The CARF interview

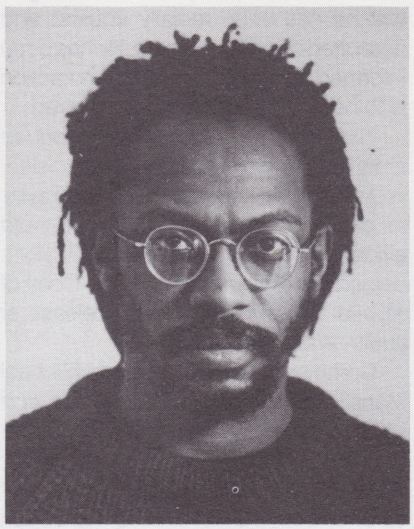
Tales from the BBC and other stories: CARF talks to Colin Prescod

CARF *It's no secret that you recently got booted out of the BBC from a fairly senior post for a black man to hold – that of commissioning editor at the Afro-Caribbean Unit. Why did it happen?*
CP Firstly, my post was only a kind of 'jumped-up' senior post. In the early 1980s, the BBC had to be seen to give some special programming access to African-Caribbeans and Asians, because of all the fuss in the '70s, the 'riots', etc. They created these 'ethnic' departments and at first they just ran them with inputs from Asians and Africans. Gradually, as black people claimed their own authority, they had to be promoted.

The head of the Afro-Caribbean unit was not a powerful position. The unit produced some 13 hours of TV in any one year. It might have been a powerful position if I could have made a push beyond the confines of the unit, but that was hard to do.

Within four months of my taking the editorship, reorganisation presented me with a line manager whose word was more important than mine, who began to control the budgets I had access to, who began to determine the style of the programmes I could make. Ultimately – I think because I made it clear that I was not happy about going into some mindless multiculturally-defined direction – they got rid of me.

CARF *So were you engaged in a political battle at the BBC?*
CP Yes, but the way we engaged was over style of programming. I was being told to do programmes which were journalistically populist. We must grab people by the things they recognise, fill the programmes with lots of 'factual information', I was told. The political difference had to do with the fact that their journalism – the straight, BBC, Birtian journalism – was based on scavenging from what people produce from life, taking from life and not giving anything back, not conceiving of anything new. They could never ask of their subjects 'What do we owe them?' Rather, they would say 'They are lucky we are interested in them.' It was those philosophical, not explicitly political, points – about how and why you do work, and the point of making a programme – which were the differences.



CARF *In concrete terms, how did that difference show? Your 'Hearsay' series had a black presenter, black discussants and a black studio audience, but black people were still disappointed in it.*
CP What I tried to do, especially in the second series, was to take issues like education, policing, mental illness, which are important to our community, and to get a new type of studio discussion, wherein activists and organisations with authority in these areas were represented. I wanted them to be quizzed about what they had done, how they thought things had changed and where the struggles around these everyday issues should be going. I was really excited about doing this, but it never took place. Before I knew what was happening, the priorities of everyone I was working with – from producer to presenter to researcher – had effectively nullified the whole project by making sure we were sitting in a 'balanced' studio discussion.

CARF *So where is the BBC going in terms of black programming?*
CP There is the merging of the Asian and Afro-Caribbean units into a multicultural programmes department. Fifteen years after people pointed out what a con notion multiculturalism is, the BBC is picking it up as if it's a radical, new, distinctive direction! And the BBC is also opening its doors to black people without any coherent idea of what it wants. There has been next to no debate about what is meant by it, how the emphasis has changed since 10 years ago. We are all behaving like individualists. The need for such a debate is something that most people just don't seem to realise.

CARF *What of the black independents. Is this a way forward?*
CP I think the black independents' push is terrific and I think that it's very successful and I hope that mainstream departments in the BBC and Channel Four do open up to this stuff. The black independent scene now is not just the people come out of the old workshop sector. There are a lot of young people who have come in from film school, from teaching themselves, from the movement of making promotional films and videos, who have technical ability and imagination, and who are ready to go if only they could get commissions.

Some of these people are very suspicious of having to deal with a multicultural unit up there in the BBC. They have already gone way beyond the multicultural hat. Blackness is here in a changed way, it now engages with whiteness, it now wants to lead, not just to be in a corner showing its 'colours'.

CARF *There seems to be in Britain a great desire, a need almost, to relate to US black films like 'Boyz n the Hood' or 'Malcolm X'. What does this signify?*
CP At first sight, it looks as if we are being defined by the US black experience. But, you know, the black movement in the UK has always connected to the US black experience since the days of Black Power. And we are not imitating South Central LA. We have our own Moss Sides, our own estates round the back of Ladbroke Grove. But nobody is yet producing the dramas that relate to those scenes. And it's partly because there is not enough finance for people to do that here. Ironically, we may soon see our young black film-makers going to America to get money to make films about British black subjects.

CARF *Finally, a quick verdict on the 'Malcolm X' film?*
CP I think that Spike Lee has marketed 'X-ism' as a matter of 'attitude' and neglected 'X-ism' as political movement. ■

Miscarriages of justice

■ Innocence

As the Royal Commission on Criminal Justice deliberates, the alliances between individual family campaigns and 'justice' organisations have gone from strength to strength.

Since the successful campaign for the release of the Cardiff Three, Innocence, an umbrella group supported by the Winston Silcott Defence Campaign and many others, including CARF, has stepped up its campaigns coordinating support for various victims of British 'justice'. A spokesperson for the group told CARF: 'Those denied justice are increasingly seeing themselves as more than just an individual case but as a result of a system that works against black, Irish and working class communities'.

Innocence is picketing the Home Office on 5 May to demand an independent body to review miscarriages of justice. Simultaneously, prisoners will begin a three-day hunger strike at Long Lartin.

Innocence, PO Box 273, Forest Gate, London E7.

■ M25 Three appeal

The M25 Three – Raphael Rowe, Michael Davis and Randolph Johnson from south London – have been informed that their appeal hearing will begin on 21 June at the Court of Appeal in London. The men were convicted of murder, robbery and firearms offences after an extraordinary trial in March 1990 in which the original suspects were presented as key prosecution witnesses, despite admitting their participation in the offences. Victims of the robberies identified two white men and a black man as taking part in the crimes – all of the defendants are black (see *CARF* No 13).

M25
CAMPAIGN
A
ON THE ROAD TO JUSTICE

Free the M25 Three
Jailed for a crime they did not commit
Monday 21 June, 9am
Appeal Court, The Strand, London

After being moved to Wormwood Scrubs in January, Raphael Rowe alleged that he has been racially abused and assaulted by prison officers. He has been informed by the governor that no action is to be taken against those involved.

The date of the appeal was announced amid continuing outrage at the decision, in January, by Lord Chief Justice Taylor to allow the prosecution to withhold evidence from the defence. Lord Taylor's decision makes inroads into the Court of Appeal ruling that led to the release of Judith Ward in May 1992.

Commenting on the decision, Michael Mansfield, QC for Raphael Rowe and Michael Davis, said that it 'runs against the grain of justice'. In a letter to CARF, Raphael Rowe expressed his anger and said: 'The Lord Chief Justice has begun restoring public confidence by rebuilding the walls that are used to keep innocent people in prison. These walls are made from non-disclosed material.' He noted the recent Matrix-Churchill case, where 'non-disclosed material was in the end disclosed and [proved] fundamental to the acquittal of the three defendants'.

The Lord Chief Justice's decision is seen as part of an attempt to halt the flood of convictions based on falsified police evidence being overturned by the Court of Appeal – in this case, at the expense of three innocent men.

The M25 Three Campaign has produced a collection of Raphael Rowe's prison poems (£4). The M25 Three Campaign, c/o Joanne Rowe, Ground floor, 42B Copleston Road, Peckham, London SE15 4AD, tel: 071-639 0568.

■ Winston Silcott fights on

A leaked report from Gartree prison on Winston Silcott, still serving time for the murder of Anthony Smith, has revealed the attitude of officialdom towards those who believe they have been wrongly convicted.

In a paragraph which claims to be an 'insight into offence-related behavioural problems', it states: 'Since Mr Silcott has taken the stance that he has been wrongly convicted, it follows that he has consistently refused ... to take part in anything associated with the planning of his sentence. He has not attended Wing Review Boards ... and has refused requests to be interviewed ... he thinks that to do so would be an admission that he has accepted his sentence.' It goes on to say: 'If Mr Silcott persists with his stance of non-cooperation with officialdom, then his prospects of release from the life sentence will remain poor.'

George Silcott, Winston's brother, told CARF: 'Winston acted in self-defence. They want him to say he is sorry for defending his life. We urge people to write to the Home Office calling for the case to be referred to the Court of Appeal.'

Winston Silcott Defence Campaign, Selby Centre, Selby Road, London N17 8JN, tel: 081-365 0448.

■ Michael Callender Campaign

Michael Callender was sentenced to life imprisonment in May 1991 for the murder of Timothy Coleman outside a pub in Finsbury Park, north London, where he worked as a bouncer.

Although in the course of the trial the prosecution clearly accepted that Michael had not committed the murder with which he was charged, the case was not dropped. The prosecution merely moved the goalposts by saying he was guilty by involvement in a 'joint enterprise' as he must have known that the murder was going to happen. Now, instead of being the killer, Michael was an accomplice. But there was no evidence that Michael even knew of the existence of the murder weapon or the possibility that a murder might be committed.

So sure of a conviction were the police, however, that they didn't even bother to verify the eye-witness accounts of the

incident. Why should they? With six of the key witnesses living together, the stories would surely match. They did, however, 'ease' a pending drug charge against one of the witnesses – a fact which was admitted in court.

Michael is angry at the way his defence was conducted, which he feels contributed to his unjust conviction. He was not even called to give evidence during the trial.

The Michael Callender Campaign is campaigning for the conviction to be overturned and against the concept of 'joint enterprise'. A spokesperson said: 'If Michael's case is anything to go by, just being in the company of a person who commits a crime, whether we know about the possibility or not, would be enough for any of us to be tarred with the same brush. If it is not necessary to prove joint enterprise in court, who is safe from criminal charges?'

Michael Callender Campaign, PO Box 2973, London N10 3UQ, tel: 081-883 6434.

Around the courts

Here we provide a glimpse into the legal world not generally offered in the press. Contributions from readers are welcome.

■ Mr Justice Macpherson

In the High Court in April, Mr Justice Macpherson, a judge well known for his 'robust' opinions, was hearing an application by a Somali refugee to stop the Home Office from sending him back to Rome, where he had spent two hours in the transit lounge. He had collapsed on arrival in Britain and, when taken to Hillingdon hospital, was found to have shrapnel lodged in his head and neck. He was discharged to Harmondsworth detention centre with painkillers, where he spent the next 10 days. On the eve of his removal, he collapsed again. The hospital readmitted him and then discharged him as 'fit to travel'. The judge did not see fit to question the treatment of this man either by the Home Office or by the hospital, merely saying that there was nothing wrong with the Home Office's decision to return him to Rome without allowing him to claim political asylum.

■ 'Eminently reasonable'

In another case in the same week, Judge Macpherson agreed that it was eminently reasonable for a British man to return to Britain for NHS treatment. But it was going too far for him to bring his Bangladeshi wife and their eight children with him, and then, evicted by his landlord for overcrowding, to expect Tower Hamlets to house them. Never mind that the man had lived and worked in Britain for 30 years, and was not permitted during that time to put his growing family on the council's waiting list for housing. 'It seems to me quite wrong', expostulated the judge, 'that a man should come here and expect to have his treatment and also expect for his family of 10 from Bangladesh to be housed over here. That is his problem.'

■ Bradford bail

In granting bail, courts have to assess the strength of a defendant's 'community ties' – such as family, friends or a job in the locality – to decide if he or she is likely to stay around for the trial. This often results in foreigners being denied bail. But in the case of a defendant charged with robbery, Bradford magistrates went too far. They decided that the man, of Pakistani origin, should be refused bail for lack of 'community ties' – even though he had lived in Bradford since he was three months old, and had parents, siblings, a wife and two children there. On appeal, the Crown court granted bail, on condition that the man live outside Bradford!

INQUEST

■ Turan Pekoz

It is possible that if staff at the Croydon immigration centre had not hidden fire extinguishers (for fear they might be used by angry asylum-seekers as weapons) Turan Pekoz might be alive today. On 12 March, hearing that he was to be separated from his family for three years, he doused himself with petrol and, shouting 'What sort of human rights do you have? I am going to condemn this to the whole world', he set himself alight. Only with paper cups of water from a drinking fountain could staff put out the fire and he died later from his burns. At his inquest, which was held without a jury, the coroner recorded a verdict of misadventure.

■ Nadeem Younus

Inquest regards the case of 21-year-old Nadeem Younus, who overdosed on paracetamol on 4 December 1992, as one of the worst cases it had come across of medical neglect, and yet the coroner did not allow the jury to consider a lack of care verdict. Instead, it returned an 'open verdict'. Nadeem's family now intend to sue Little Hey prison for negligence.

They are not satisfied as to how their son, who had been identified as seriously mentally ill, managed to have access to a 500ml tub of paracetamol in the prison's hospital and was left for over 18 hours without any medical attention (excepting observation) after it was suspected that he had taken an overdose. Their suspicions were not allayed by the prison doctor who refused, at the inquest, to answer the questions posed by the lawyer representing the family on the ground that he might incriminate himself.

■ Orville Blackwood

Clara Buckley has campaigned for almost two years to find out how her son, Orville Blackwood, died on 28 August 1991 in a seclusion room at Broadmoor special hospital. He was restrained and forcibly injected with three and one-and-a-half times the recommended limits of two powerful sedative drugs. He died minutes later from heart failure.

Not content with an inquest verdict of 'accidental death', she applied to have it quashed and a new inquest held. But, at Bracknell, this April, the second inquest again returned 'accidental death'. This verdict was reached despite the jury hearing that the doctor who made the decision to drug Orville was not his responsible medical officer, that original witness statements differed from evidence presented at the inquest, and contradictory reports on the number of nursing staff involved in the incident.

Clara Buckley told CARF, 'I still do not feel we have got to the truth of why Orville died. I want his death to be the last of its kind and we have to work together as a community to make sure we challenge a system that is seriously going wrong.'

Challenge the system by joining the Orville Blackwood Community Campaign, c/o 7 Hubert Grove, London SW2; and write to the Royal College of Psychiatrists, 17 Belgrave Square, London SW1X 8PG, to express concern about the way that phenothiazine drugs have been used on Orville and other prisoners, resulting in heart failure.

Inquest, 330 Seven Sisters Rd, London N4 2PG.

Racist attacks – more deaths

As we go to press, we have just learnt of the tragic murder of an African-Caribbean youth in Eltham, south-east London. Stephen Lawrence, aged 18, was waiting at a bus stop with friends, when they were set upon by a gang of white youths who shouted racist abuse before stabbing Stephen to death. Now, following this, the third such senseless murder in this part of south-east London, will we see the authorities move to bring about the closure of the BNP HQ in nearby Bexley?

London

The battered body of Asian taxi driver Fiaz Mirza was pulled out of the Royal Albert Docks in *east London* on 17 March. Mr Mirza had gone missing two and a half weeks earlier, when he failed to return from taking a fare to Custom House, a racist stronghold in Newham. Two white youths from Custom House have been arrested and charged with the murder after boasting that they had 'just killed a Paki'. Despite this and strong community feeling about the levels of racist violence in the area, police are 'keeping an open mind' as to the motivation for the murder.

But even if the police do make arrests, what action can we expect from the CPS? After a half-hearted and poorly presented CPS case against those arrested for the murder of refugee Panchadcharam Sahitharan, the Newham Monitoring Project have cause to criticise the CPS again. It has dropped the charges against those accused of murdering Sher Singh Sagoo, a Newham resident killed after being violently assaulted by a racist gang in Deptford market.

In *Tower Hamlets*, a firebomb attack on the home of Sultana Khanum and her two children led to the death of her next-door neighbour, an elderly white man, by smoke inhalation. Later the same night, at 4am, another family in the same block suffered an arson attack, although no one was injured. Days earlier, the Khanum family had had a special council phone line installed in their flat to deal with racist attacks. The tower block where they live has been the target of a persistent campaign by racists against Bengali residents, including the pointing of a handgun through letterboxes. The Island Against the Nazis is organising activities against racist attacks in the area.

West London, where the National Front has recently established a local office, has been the scene of several violent attacks. Mark Vowel narrowly escaped death after being racially abused by three white men and pushed on to the railway track at Southall train station. Seventeen-year-old Billy Gill lost his sight in one eye after an attack on the Ivybridge estate in Hounslow; two white youths have been charged with his attempted murder.

Two members of the gang which attacked Newham Monitoring Project and CARF members in Custom House in *Newham* (see *CARF* No 13) have been charged with actual bodily harm and grievous bodily harm. A trial is expected later this year. NMP is also calling for two of the brothers involved in the attack to be evicted from their council property.

Campaigns across UK

Attacks in *Newcastle* are continuing, following the murder of Mr Miah last year. As CARF goes to press, Neils Michael Neilson is standing trial for his murder. But the BNP, some of whose members are rumoured to live on the same Jubilee estate as Neilson, is campaigning for his acquittal and organising spates of 'Paki-bashing' in response.

Anti-racists in *Nottingham* are stepping up their campaign after further incidents. An Asian shopkeeper was attacked by men with iron bars as he locked up his shop – no attempt was made to steal the day's takings that he was carrying. An Asian student from Nottingham university was also attacked outside a local nightclub by a white bouncer, who reportedly told him, 'We don't want too many of your sort in here.'

One of the few black families on a council estate in Quinton, *Birmingham*, have been forced to move after having their home ransacked. The contents of the Millers' home were completely destroyed and excrement smeared around the house. The family and the Birmingham Racial Attacks Monitoring Unit claim that this was part of a campaign of racist abuse, including threats of violence and taunts of 'go home nigger'. The West Midlands police, however, have claimed that 'racial attacks in Quinton are extremely rare'. They are refusing to consider any motive other than that of simple burglary and have not brought charges against two white men who were questioned.

White women and their children formed a human barricade in the Welsh village of *Abercanaid* after a gang hurled racist abuse and threatened to torch the shop of Ali Khan. The women linked arms for over three hours to bar the way of the gang until the police arrived. ■

Yves Forestier/Sygma

'Makome - killed by the police' reads the banner at this angry demonstration in Paris following the death of a 17-year-old Zairean, Makome M'Bowole, shot in the head by a police officer while being interrogated at the Grandes-Carrierès police station. The shooting was one of four killings which have occurred in France since the appointment of the notorious Charles Pasqua as Interior Minister and the subsequent intensification of mass identity checks on the streets of France. Pascal Tais, a 32-year-old Arab, died in police custody in Arachon from a ruptured spleen after being arrested for disorderly conduct. (Police say that the blow that ruptured his spleen was self-inflicted!) Rachid Ardjounis, a 17-year-old Arab, was shot in the head in Wattrelos, northern France, after police chased him (his alleged crime, trespassing on school grounds).
Meanwhile there have been more deaths in Italy and Spain following racist attacks. Italian police are attempting to de-racialise an arson attack in March on a refugee centre in Trento, in the Alps in north-eastern Italy, in which five refugees from Kosova were killed. In April, an anti-fascist skinhead was killed by neo-nazis in Valencia.

■ Stop deportations

Thousands of people marched through Bolton on 3 April to support the Rahman family in their fight against deportation and to protest against the Asylum and Immigration Appeals Bill. The threatened fascist disruption of the march failed to materialise.

Mr Rahman, whose wife has cancer and whose daughter has multiple handicaps, spoke at the rally and vowed that the family would fight on in their struggle to stay in Britain. After the demonstration, various local anti-deportation initiatives agreed to improve coordination between each other to mount a sustained campaign against the racist logic behind the new immigration laws and to challenge deportations. A conference is planned for later this year.

Prakash Chavrimootoo, threatened with deportation after leaving her violent husband, has been told by immigration minister Charles Wardle that while there are 'some compassionate circumstances ... they are not so compelling that I feel able to use my discretion in [your] favour ... [you] should now make arrangements to leave the United Kingdom as soon as possible.' Prakash later commented: 'The Home Office is telling me to put up or shut up. I am not going to put up, neither am I going to shut up'. The campaign continues.

Mamta Chopra, refused permission to stay in similar circumstances, was due to have an appeal hearing on 26 April in Leeds at which over 2,000 letters sent to the Home Office in her support were to be presented.

Naheed Ejaz, a British citizen threatened with deportation because her husband (from whom she is separated) entered Britain illegally, is hopeful that a forthcoming judicial review of her situation will rule in her favour. The Naheed Ejaz Campaign, based at the Women's Information Centre in Reading, will be organising a picket of the High Court in London on 13 July during the hearing. *Contact CARF for details.*

■ Extradition

CARF supporter Sally Croft and friend Susan Hagan are fighting extradition orders to the US, where they face trumped-up charges of conspiring to murder a federal attorney, which could bring 20 years in jail. The charges arise out of the political dispute between the US authorities and the commune of Bhagwan Rajneesh, which the two left in disillusionment over seven years ago. Their innocence is obvious, especially since no attempt was ever made on the attorney's life and other former members of the commune have accused them in return for their own immunity from prosecution. But Sally fears that, because Britain wants to guarantee future US cooperation on the extradition of IRA suspects to Britain, they will be sacrificed. *If you want to help the campaign to stop the extraditions, contact CARF.*

■ Solidarity with German anti-racists

CARF is concerned that Germany, in an effort to rehabilitate its international image, is now suppressing information on racism – much of it government-inspired – and racist attacks.

You may not know that, in February, over 3,000 Romanian refugees, at least one-third of whom were Roma, were deported from Berlin to Bucharest, escorted by members of the Romanian security forces. Student activists at Berlin's Free University have written to CARF calling for European solidarity action to draw attention to government plans to repatriate guestworkers, principally from Angola, Mozambique and Vietnam.

'We urge you to initiate a letter-writing campaign to the German embassy in your country', write the activists. 'Some of the guestworkers already returned have been killed. The number of guest-workers (many of whom have lived in Germany for 10 years) who remain is small. Many have been exposed to very hard and dangerous working conditions in the coal mines and factories of the former GDR. The German government has not even given them redundancy pay. If returned to the war-torn and famine-stricken countries of Angola, Mozambique and Vietnam, there is no way that they will receive the medical attention they need.'

Racial violence

On 14 January, the German government issued a report, 'German government and people opposed to xenophobia and violence', which argued: 'Since October 1992 there has been a rapid decline in the number of xenophobic offences registered.' In response, CARF wrote to the embassy detailing 12 deaths that occurred in the first three months of 1993 where a racial motive was either proved or could not be ruled out. Most disturbing was the case of Mike Zerna, brutally murdered in Hoyerswerda by a group of neo-nazis who buried him under a car.

Embarrassment for German embassy

Student journalists from City University have asked us to publicise their challenge to the racist rules of a competition, instigated by the German embassy, at their college. Each year, the embassy addresses students and offers a prize for the best 1,500-word article on a German issue. But the prize – a week's study visit to Germany – is, according to the embassy's stipulation, 'open to British passport holders only'. When angry students pointed out the racism of this at Herr Friedrich Groning's talk on 'Right-wing extremism in Germany', an embarrassed Herr Groning indicated that it was a mistake and would not happen in future.

Please show solidarity with German anti-racists by writing to the German embassy. (If you would like current details of racist attacks in Germany, please phone us.)

Mark Salmon

■ Black community services under attack

Following last year's withdrawal of funding from the Racial Attacks Monitoring Project, Leicester City Council has launched another attack on black groups in the area. This time, the Asian Youth Project in Belgrave is threatened with closure. The council's shoddy excuse is that AYP does not provide value for money – yet its own direct youth service costs at least twice as much per head. AYP has mounted a campaign to defend the only resource for young Asian people in the area.

In Manchester, the city council seems to have nothing better to do than attack groups providing services to the black community, including two Asian women's refuges. It has cut the grants of the South Manchester Law Centre, on the grounds that it undertakes a 'disproportionate' amount of immigration advice, and of the Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit, which provides help to people under threat of deportation.

Leicester Asian Youth Project, Belgrave, Leicester, tel: 0533-530152
Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit, 400 Cheetham Hill Road, Manchester M8 7EL

■ Elections and the Right

The May local elections in Britain promise another overwhelming and humiliating defeat for the NF and BNP. But elsewhere in Europe, the fascists pose a serious threat on the electoral front.

Germany

On 7 March, local elections in the Hesse region gave a boost to the Republikaner Party, which gained an overall 8.3% of the votes cast. Added to the votes of the other fascist parties – the DVU 0.2% and the NPD 0.7% – the far Right gained 9.2% of the vote. (In 1989 the overall fascist vote was 2.1%.) Though the Republikaner did well in many parts of Hesse (eg Offenbach 15.1%, Wiesbaden 13.1%, Giessen 10.4%), it was in Frankfurt that its vote of 9.3% was most significant, giving it 10 of the 93 seats on the city council. With a drop of seven SPD councillors, the prospect of a future CDU/Republikaner alliance governing Frankfurt is frighteningly close. In south Germany, in places like Baden, such an alliance is being openly canvassed by sections of the CDU, bringing with it the prospect of fascists holding the balance of power in local government.

While the Hesse result is not the Republikaner's best in recent months, it does give credence to those who have been warning that the fascists' electoral strength could result in their winning at least one seat in the national parliament elections next year.

Mark Salmon

France

In 1986, under proportional representation, the Front National won 10% of the votes and 33 seats in the French parliament, only to lose the latter two years later when the system was changed. If the 1986 system had been in operation for this March's election, the FN's 12.5% of the vote would have meant a gain of 64 seats. As it is, the largest ever FN vote in any parliamentary elections converted into no seats at all.

But we should take little comfort in the FN's absence from parliament. The general election was unpopular (only a 70% turn-out), and resulted in a massive swing to the RPR/UDF conservative Right, whose election promises included tough action on immigration. Yet the FN still increased its vote. Indeed, its total of 3 million votes is disturbingly close to the Socialist Party's 5 million, and the FN's 12.5% share is alarmingly higher than the Communists' 9.1% and the ecology parties' 7.6%. It seems that the racism of the conservatives did not attract FN voters to the RPR/UDF, rather racism remains a vote winner for all.

We are now faced with a fascist party which is not simply the repository of a racist protest vote. The FN has a solid, stable electoral base which, though small, includes a sizeable proportion of working-class (18%) and young (15%) voters. As for representation, it has 239 local councillors. When the strains between the UDF and RPR nationally start to show, the potential for local alliances is there. For the past 10 years, the FN has used elections to build its base and to spread its poison into the body politic. Next year, there are the European elections, and in 1995, the presidential election.

May elections checklist

BNP: S Glamorgan (Glanely) – Anthony Morgan; Derby (Cotmanham) – John Leather; Lancs, Colne (Pendle) – S E Crambie; Herts (South Oxney) – Peter Illing; Stoke-on-Trent (Fenton Green) – Steven Batkin; Leics (Kirby Muxloe) – John Peacock, (Ratby) – James Taylor

NF: Hemel Hempstead, Herts (Dacorum) – John McAuley, (St Pauls) – Steven Keen; Herts (Kings Langley) – Simon Deacon; Cannockchase (Chadsmore) – Andrew Carmichael

■ Metzger ban

Information received by CARF in April and passed on to the *Observer* helped to alert the anti-fascist movement to a proposed tour of the UK, at the invitation of Combat 18, of White Aryan Resistance founder Tom Metzger and his associate, Dennis Mahon. As we go to press, we understand that the Home Secretary has moved to ban Metzger, and his son, from entering the UK.

Metzger (who has his own cable TV programme broadcast to 30 cities) was brought to civil trial in 1990 by the Southern Poverty Law Centre for inciting the death of an Ethiopian student, Mulugeta Seraw, killed by three skinheads who were convicted of murder. Metzger's son John, who recruited the skinheads, was also convicted for his involvement in the murder.

A recent attempt by Metzger to overturn the court decision that he pay Mulugeta Seraw's family $12.5m compensation was unsuccessful.

FOOTBALL

■ Racists out of the Valley

First division Charlton Athletic's long-awaited return to the Valley ground this season is being marred by a small group of racist fans. But the club's management, the supporters' club and Greenwich council are moving to isolate the racists.

Following systematic racist chants at the ground, the official club programme for the FA Cup fixture with Leeds United carried a strong anti-racist statement. The club followed this up with a statement directed at young people whom it was hoping to attract to half-term football courses, warning them that 'Racist name calling, chants, graffiti, harassment or discrimination of any kind is not acceptable' at the Valley.

But the Charlton Athletic Supporters' Club, which has received many complaints from fans about the racist chanting, says that the statements must now be translated into concerted action. It says that although the racist fans are a small minority, congregating in the north stand, the situation is escalating out of control. 'What was once a very small minority are becoming increasingly vocal as they grow in numbers and confidence, and there is a danger of more and more impressionable youngsters being sucked in.'

Concerned supporters say that police and stewards must take a stronger stance, and cite one incident, during a fixture with Bristol City, when the police failed to respond to complaints about racist chants.

Greenwich council wants the police to monitor whether the racist chanting is being orchestrated by known fascists who may be attempting to make the Valley ground a BNP ground, following the setting up of the BNP headquarters in Bexley, just a few miles away.

Charlton Athletic Supporters' Club, PO Box 387, London SE9 6EH.

REVIEWS

Beyond working-class stereotypes

Spirit of '69 is not exactly an easy book to review. On the one hand, it's a brilliant history of skinheads, their music, fashion and politics. But, on the other hand, the author's attitude towards 'politics' is confusing. George Marshall seems to take the view that right-wing politics are for working-class mugs and that left-wing politics for silly middle-class students temporarily rebelling against their parents.

Spirit of '69 succeeds in showing skinheads in a positive light, tracing the cult's history from 1969 when skins listened to their trojan reggae, dancing away to the likes of 'Young, gifted and black' by Bob and Marcia. Ironic, then, that a cult that promoted this kind of music should be bastardised by the far Right. Nazi links with the skinhead cult are gone into at length. Information on Blood & Honour bands, the British Movement and the NF provides a valuable source of information.

But for me, the most important thing to get from this book is not the names of a few dodgy, bonehead Blood & Honour bands, but the questions it, by default, raises.

Why has the left become so distant from so many working-class people? Could it be that it only sees 'politics' in terms of strikes and industrial action and has become distant from culture – or, more to the point, working-class culture. And what can we do about it? While many so-called socialists have been quite happy to condemn football fans and skinheads as mindless hooligans, the far Right hasn't written them off, but has told them they're special.

To be effective as anti-racists, it is important to understand disaffected white youth (even as we fight those who turn to the far Right). Hopefully, *Spirit of '69* can help in this process.

Spirit of '69: a skinhead bible by George Marshall, £8.95 from ST Publishing, PO Box 12, Dunoon, Argyll, PA23 7BQ, Scotland.
This review has been contributed by Ray from *Between the Lines* (PO Box 32, 136 Kingsland High St, London E8), a new broadsheet written by socialists who want to put forward socialist ideas in a straightforward and readable way.

TRENDS

Racism and unemployment

Unemployment is growing, and fast. No industry, region or community is free from its ravages. But black people throughout Britain are suffering much higher unemployment rates than white people.

In 1984, when the white unemployment rate was 11.4%, for 'ethnic minority groups' it was 21.4%. By 1990, the rate for the white community had fallen to 6.5%, but for 'ethnic minority groups' it was 11.2%.

With the recent rapid rise in all unemployment, black unemployment has, once again, increased by a greater proportion. Figures based on the 1991 census show a white unemployment rate of 8.8% and a non-white rate of 18.3%. Regionally, the disparities are even greater. For instance, in the West Midlands, the white unemployment rate is 8.74%, the non-white is 21.74%; in Yorkshire and Humberside, rates are white community 9.37%, non-white 23.6%. For some local communities, the proportions are higher still: Asian workers in Tower Hamlets have an unemployment rate of 42%, and for black Liverpudlians it is 35.4%.

There could be worse to come, with reorganisation, cutbacks, privatisation and deregulation in areas where black people have traditionally found employment – for example, London Transport, British Rail, the Post Office and local authorities.

'Race and unemployment', a report by GMB Union, March 1993; 'Ethnic origins and the labour market', *Employment Gazette*, February 1993.

February

23 After inquest on Omasase Lumumba, High Court judge criticises coroner's ruling that unlawful killing verdict is not an option ... East Berliner charged with attempted murder during Rostock race riots last August.

26 Companies bidding for government contracts not required to have equal opportunities policies, says confidential Cabinet Office advice ... High Court rejects claim by two Manchester mothers that multi-faith assemblies were unlawful under 1988 Education Reform Act.

28 In his first major speech, new London police chief Paul Condon says police must be 'totally intolerant' of internal racism.

March

2 Court of Appeal overturns convictions of four people after claims that east London Stoke Newington police planted drugs on them ... 100 asylum-seekers in Haslar prison on hunger strike over length of detention.

6 BR's European Passenger Services will be exempt from Immigration (Carrier Liability) Act, says Home Office.

8 Two Germans jailed for three years for arson attack on asylum-seekers home in Neubrandenberg, north-east Germany, last August ... Two men indicted on charges over fire that killed three Turks in Molln last November.

9 German gypsies warn of growing Nazism after German League puts up ransom and wanted posters for Macedonian gypsy in hiding to evade deportation.

10 Employment Appeals Tribunal dismisses Metropolitan police appeal to keep secret internal documents relating to policewoman's claim of racial and sexual discrimination ... Britain has not granted asylum to any applicants from former Yugoslavia, say refugee agencies, which also criticise government for delaying visas and dividing families.

12 Two doctors arrested by fraud squad for making job applications in race discrimination study of medical profession may face disciplinary action by the British Medical Council ... Following Cardiff Three case, police told not to shout at suspects ... Kurdish asylum-seeker Turan Pekoz, protesting at being separated from his family, sets fire to himself at Quest House immigration office in south London.

15 Bradford council concedes failure to protect ethnic minority staff because of fear of white electoral backlash ... Yorkshire industrial tribunal faces record series of 130 race discrimination cases from Asian millworkers ... Sacked black health visitor receives record £27,000 for race victimisation from Hounslow and Spelthorne health authority.

16 Turan Pekoz dies from his burns ... Leeds council ordered to compensate black care assistant after industrial tribunal finding of racial discrimination, and starts inquiry into recruitment procedures.

17 Bromley council decides not to allow NF to hold meetings at its civic centre.

20 30 men carrying neo-nazi South African party flag and with BNP leaflets violently disrupt meeting on South Africa in Burnley.

21 Local government ombudsman criticises Tower Hamlets council for continuing to force Asian families to live on 'race-hate' Teviot estate.

23 Jamaican mother fights deportation order on her 18-year-old daughter as Home Office reprieves only her 11-year-old daughter ... DPP gets another dossier on allegations of malpractice of Stoke Newington police.

25 Leicester council evicts two tenants for racial harassment after they displayed racist posters in their window ... Police investigate anti-semitic material posted to residents of Hertfordshire village where housing for orthodox Jews is planned ... Strathclyde deputy director of education accused of racist views requests early retirement after regional council takes no disciplinary action against him.

26 Five people committed to trial for racist murder of Ruhullah Aramesh in Thornton Heath, south London, last July all given bail.

27 Combat 18 believed to be behind attack on Freedom press bookshop in east London.

28 Policy Studies Institute report says unemployment rates of Pakistanis, Bangladeshis and African Caribbeans shows 'highly disadvantaged underclass' ... After election landslide, new right-wing French government expected to take tough anti-immigrant measures.

29 Two policemen who beat Estonian during raid on asylum-seekers' hostel in Rindsdorf, Germany, last October charged with assault and battery.

31 1,139 foreigners (including Vietnamese, Sri Lankans and Somalians) arrested for immigration offences in March, says Russia's counter-intelligence chief ... Germany introduces new accelerated asylum application procedures.

April

1 Inquest into death of Turan Pekoz hears that staff hid fire extinguishers in case angry asylum-seekers used them as weapons.

4 Three police chiefs admit that some officers habitually used to bend rules to secure convictions.

5 London Underground agrees to pay over £60,000 compensation to 20 black station managers after admitting discrimination in performance pay scheme.

6 17-year-old black Frenchman, Makome M'Bowole, shot dead during questioning in Paris police station.

7 Single parent organisations say inadequate Child Support Agency training will increase racism ... A Miss Czech and Slovak beauty queen contestant says she wants to become a lawyer and 'cleanse' northern Bohemia of gypsies.

8 Policeman charged with murder of Makome M'Bowole, as fresh clashes between protesters and riot police break out. Prime minister Edouard Balladur promises repressive anti-immigrant measures.

10 17-year-old Rachid Ardjani dies after being shot three days earlier by police in Torcoing, near Lille ... Black students are five times more likely to be denied medical school places than their white counterparts, Universities Central Council on Admission figures show.

11 MORI poll commissioned by Merseyside police authority, says Liverpool's black community is 'alienated by racist policing'.

15 Suspected neo-Nazis attack Sri Lankan community leader in Rome ... Three right-wing extremists given jail terms (one of them suspended) of two and three years for firebombing asylum-seekers' home during riots in Rostock last August.

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